

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A universal passive protector for an IV catheter, comprising:
a hypodermic needle;
an over-the-needle catheter, including a hub, disposed about the needle;
a hub trap comprising first and second arms;
an elongate sheath; and
a slider connected to a proximal end of the needle, the slider being
movable along the sheath from a distal position to a proximal position; wherein
when the slider is in the distal position, the needle extends through a
locking structure of the hub trap and retains the first and second arms in a closed
position wherein the hub is trapped between the first and second arms; and
when the slider is in the proximal position, a distal tip of the needle is
proximal of the locking structure and the first and second arms are in an open
position wherein the hub is released from the hub trap.
2. The protector of Claim 1, wherein the hub is released only when the
slider is in the proximal position, and remains trapped within the hub trap when the
slider is in the distal position or in any position intermediate the distal position and the
proximal position.
3. The protector of Claim 1, wherein when the slider is in the distal position
or in any position intermediate the distal position and the proximal position, the needle
contacts the arms and provides a force counteracting a spring force biasing the arms
toward the open position.
4. The protector of Claim 1, wherein when the arms are in the open
position, interlocking fingers of the first and second arms block the needle and prevent
it from reemerging from the sheath.
5. The protector of Claim 1, wherein a stop is positioned at a proximal end
of the sheath and prevents the slider from disengaging the sheath via the proximal end.
6. The protector of Claim 1, wherein the arms are pivotable about an axis
substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the protector.
7. The protector of Claim 1, wherein the slider comprises a hollow interior
chamber in fluid communication with a central lumen of the needle.

8. The protector of Claim 7, wherein a portion of the slider is transparent and allows viewing of the interior chamber.

9. The protector of Claim 1, wherein the sheath comprises a first substantially cylindrical member.

5 10. The protector of Claim 9, wherein the sheath further comprises a second substantially cylindrical member slidably disposed about the first member, such that the first and second members are telescoping.

10 11. The protector of Claim 1, wherein the hub further comprises a substantially flat fin defining a plane substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the protector.